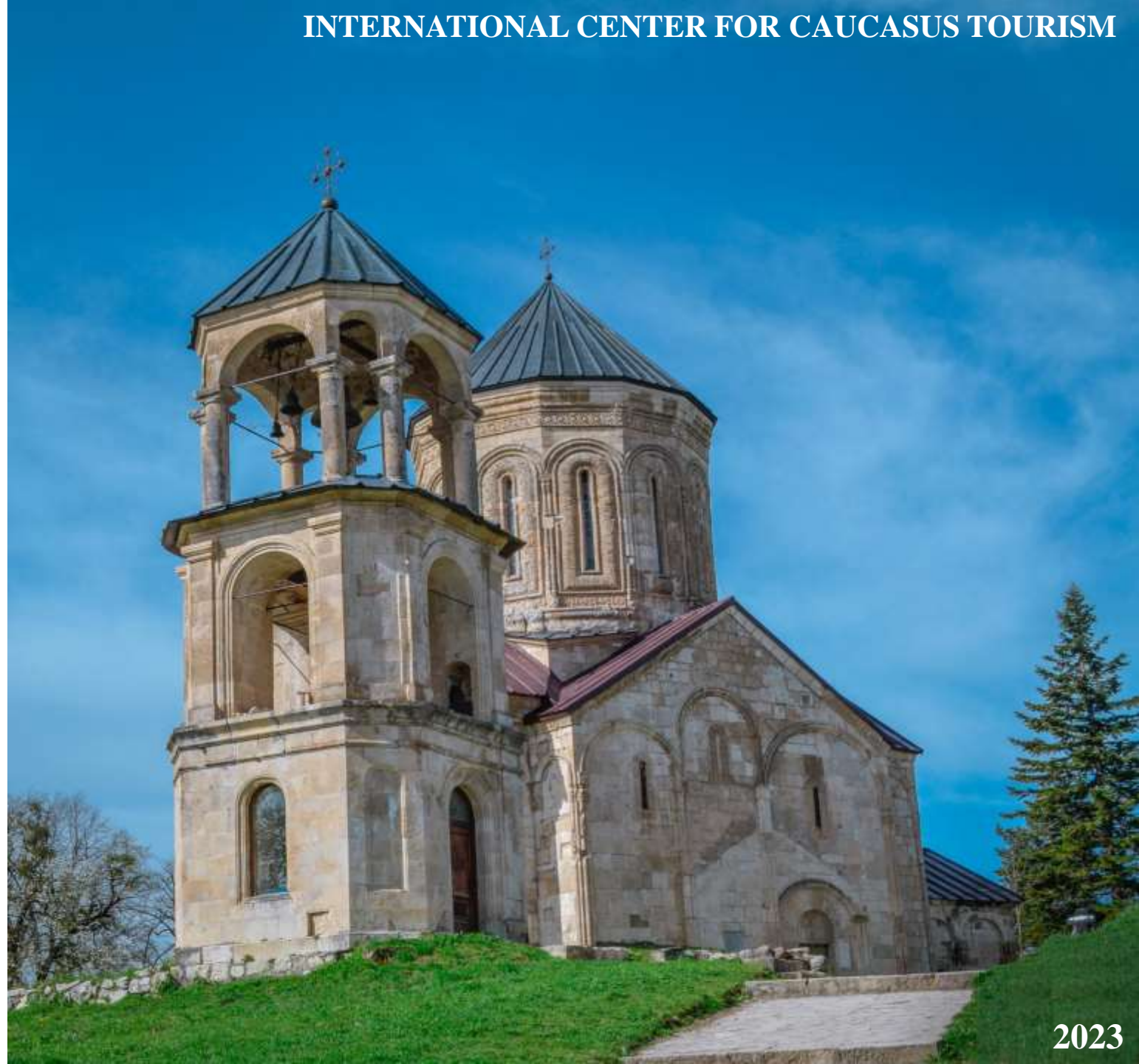


# Seven Days in West Georgia



# About the Country

## Quick Overview

The country covers an area of 69,700 square kilometers (26,900 sq mi), and has a population of 3.7 million people. Tbilisi is its capital and largest city, home to roughly a third of the Georgian population.



Administrative Divisions of Georgia



The following regions are part of the tour

<b>Georgia</b> საქართველო (Georgian) <i>Sakartvelo</i>	
 Flag	 Coat of arms
<b>Motto:</b> ძალა ერთობაშია <i>Dzala ertobashia</i> "Strength is in Unity"	
<b>Anthem:</b> თავისუფლება <i>Tavisupleba</i> "Freedom"	

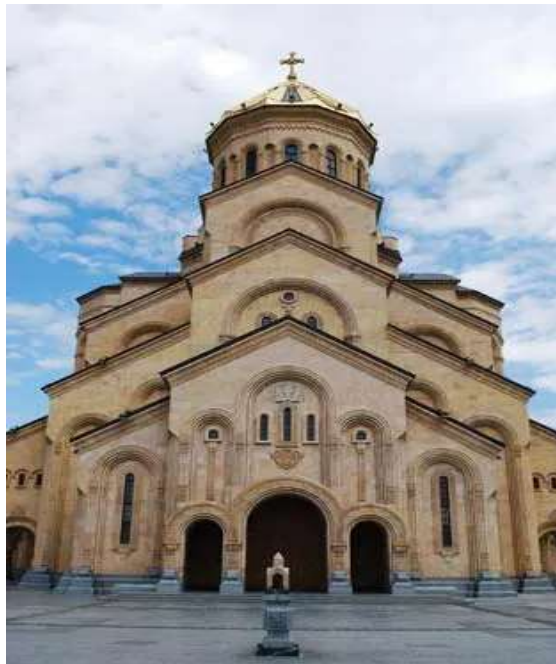
# Christianity in Georgia



Saint Nino of Cappadocia, baptizer of the Georgians.

84% of the population in Georgia practices Orthodox Christianity. According to Orthodox tradition, Christianity was first preached in Georgia by the Apostles Simon and Andrew in the 1st century. It became the state religion in 319. The conversion to Christianity is credited to a woman, St. Nino of Cappadocia. The Georgian Orthodox Church, originally part of the Church of Antioch, gained its autocephaly and developed its doctrinal specificity progressively between the V and X centuries. The Bible was also translated into Georgian in the V century, as the Georgian alphabet was developed for that purpose. As was true elsewhere, the Christian church in Georgia was crucial to the development of a written language, and most of the earliest written works were religious texts. Georgian Orthodox Christian Active Churches are almost in 35 counties beyond Georgia.

**Georgian Orthodox church**  
Tbilisi Holy Trinity Cathedral,  
Tbilisi, Geo



Jvari Monastery, near Mtskheta, one of Georgia's oldest surviving monasteries (VI century)

Imereti is a region of Georgia situated in western part of the country along the middle and upper reaches of the Rioni River.

Imereti is the most populous region in Georgia. It consists of 11 municipalities and the central city of Kutaisi, which is the capital of the region

Area: 6,680 km<sup>2</sup>; Population: 486,986



# Arrival at Kutaisi International Airport- 23 km from city Kutaisi



Setting up at hotel. Located in the historical place on the hill with a splendid view of Kutaisi, within 5 minutes' walk to the Bagrati Cathedral (XI c) and 10 minutes walk to the center of the city.

<https://www.booking.com/hotel/ge/argopalace.en->

Kutaisi is a largest city in West Georgia and the oldest in the world, 3500 years (UN). It's home to the centuries- old Bagrati Cathedral. On the city's outskirts, the Gelati Monastery is a medieval cathedral with elaborate frescoes. The nearby hillside Motsameta Monastery has martyrs' remains. Historical Georgian manuscripts, ceramics and textiles are on display at the Kutaisi State Historical Museum. To the northwest, Prometheus Cave features petrified waterfalls. — Google

Area: 67.7 km; Weather: 14°C; Population 247,500



## 10:00 Drive to Bagrati Cathedral

10 km

The **Cathedral of the Dormition**, or the **Kutaisi Cathedral**, more commonly known as **Bagrati Cathedral**, is an 11th-century cathedral in the city of Kutaisi, in the Imereti region of Georgia. A masterpiece of the medieval Georgian architecture, the cathedral suffered heavy damage throughout centuries and was reconstructed to its present state through a gradual process starting in the 1950s, with controversial conservation works concluding in 2012. In July 2010 UNESCO added Bagrati cathedral to its list of endangered world heritage sites.



## 10:00 Drive to Gelati Monastery

10 km

On the lower southern slopes of the mountains of the Northern Caucasus, **Gelati Monastery** reflects the 'golden age' of medieval Georgia, a period of political strength and economic growth between the reigns of King David IV 'the Builder' (1089-1125) and Queen Tamar (1184-1213). It was David who, in 1106 began building the monastery near his capital Kutaisi on a wooded hill above the river Tskaltsitela. The monastery is richly decorated with mural paintings from the 12th to 17th centuries, as well as a 12th century mosaic in the apse of the main church, depicting the Virgin with Child flanked by archangels. Its high architectural quality, outstanding decoration, size, and clear spatial quality combine to offer a vivid expression of the artistic idiom of the architecture of the Georgian "Golden Age" and its almost completely intact surroundings allow an understanding of the intended fusion between architecture and landscape.



Gelati was not simply a monastery: it was also a center of science and education, and the Academy established.



## 10:00 Drive to to Motsameta Monastery

6 km

**Motsameta monastery**, Georgian Orthodox Church, VIII century, is a complex of monasteries at the Imereti region, approximately 6 km northeast of the center of Kutaisi, Georgia. The monastery is picturesquely located on the cliff of a promontory in the curve of the Ckalcitela River, a tributary of the Rioni River.

**Imereti Food and Wine**

You can find Georgian staples such as ojakhuri and phkhali at most restaurants Imeruli. Khachapuri is the first you are recommended to try. Imereti is one of the most diverse wine regions in Georgia. The varieties spread in Imereti are: Tsojikauri, Tsitska, Krakhuna.



## 10:00 Drive to Sataplia Cave

12 km

**Sataplia cave is one of the main tourist sights around Kutaisi town, in Georgia.**

Established in 1935 to protect the Sataplia Cave and dinosaur footprints found in the area, this visitor attraction recently benefited from a very attractive refurbishment of its Sataplia Cave visitor center.

Sataplia Cave is named after Sataplia Mountain, which gained its name from the local tradition of collecting honey from the bees that inhabit the mountain's southern slope. Sataplia means 'place of honey'.

Sataplia - an unique reservoir with its special microclimate and endemic tree-plants (Kolkheti forest). The place is known for the dinosaurs' footprint dated back to millions of years. Also, karst caves.

In Sataplia Nature Reserve you can see the Glass Trench, from which all Imereti is visible.



## 12:00 Drive to Prometheus Cave

23 km

**Prometheus Cave** developed 60-70 million years ago in the Sataplia-Tskhaltubo karsts massif. It is known to be the largest cave in Georgia, the cave's exact size is unclear as exploration work remains underway. However, a 1.8km long segment, thought to represent just 10% of the entire cave, is open to visitors.

To date, 22 halls have been discovered inside the cave. Only the following six halls are accessible to tourists: Argonauts, Kolkheti, Medea, Love, Hall, and Iberia. It takes about 45 minutes to explore these magically full of stalactites, stalagmites, and underground waterfalls, lakes, and rivers.

The spectacular colored lighting, combined with soft classical music, evokes a beautiful and mysterious atmosphere.

Recommend wearing comfortable shoes when visiting the cave, as you will need to walk for about an hour and the ground can be slippery.

The temperature in the cave is a constant +14°C, while humidity varies between 96 and 98%.



## 15:00 Visit of Kutaisi State Historical Museum

Kutaisi State Historical Museum, formally known as the Niko Berdzenishvili Kutaisi State History Museum is a museum in Kutaisi, Georgia. A major museum, it is also considered to be one of the most important scientific- research institutions in Georgia with its extensive research library and laboratory. The museum, which was established in 1921–22 in the former National Bank of Georgia building, contains more than 190,000 artifacts, displaying the archaeological, numismatic, paleographical, ethnographical and spiritual heritage of Georgia.



17:00 A walk through the center of Kutaisi

22:00 Back to Kutaisi Hotel

## 09:00 Drive to Racha Region

Area: 2,893 km<sup>2</sup>

**We keep hearing that once you experience Racha, you keenly want to go back, over and over again. Racha is a highland area in western Georgia, located in the upper Rioni river valley and hemmed in by the Greater Caucasus Mountains. Under Georgia's current subdivision, Racha is divided into Lower Racha (city Ambrolauri) and Upper Racha (city Oni)**



## 12:00 Shaori water reservoir

60 km



## 13:00 Setting up at Shaori Hotel

## 14:00 Nikortsminda Church, XI c.

6 km

Nikortsminda Church is a masterpiece of national architecture, built at the beginning of the XI century, domed temple in Racha. Since October 24, 2007, Nikortsminda Monastery has been included in the tentative list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites.



## 15:00 Khvanchkara Winery

30 km

**KHVANCHKARA****WINERY**

In Racha, in the village Khvanchkara on the place of the Cellar of Prince Kipiani in 1927 Khvanchkara Winery was built, which we represent today as “Khvanchkara” Ltd. The wine-makers who have been working in the Winery for decades, passed on the Kipiani method of Khvanchkara Winemaking to the new generation that continues this fine wine making tradition

**Georgian Brandy Khvanchkara “XO”**

The best brandy XO is manufactured from the collection brandy spirits of not less than 15 years old distilled in the Georgian winemaking regions. The Deep golden colored XO transferred into amber color is effectively combined with clearly expressed brandy bouquet with its fire coloring. Aroma is complex, clearly expressed in brandy tones with soft, velvety long-lasting taste.



## 16:00 Wine Degustation and lunch

# Racha Cuisine







**Utsera** resort is located in Upper Racha, on the banks of the river Rioni, at 1150 meters a.s.l. The resort is famous for its beautiful nature, forests, alpine meadows, and amazing views of the icy peaks which attract many tourists. Utsera is a climatic-balneological resort with moderately cold winters and long warm summers. The average temperature in January is  $-5^{\circ}\text{C}$ , and in August  $+27^{\circ}\text{C}$ . The main healing factors are mountain climate and mineral water "Utsera". This resort is one of the perfect places for mountain vacation lovers. Here you will be able to unwind in a comfortable environment, in the fresh air of nature. You can also arrange small trips, picnics, or hikes if you love adventure and diversity. Utsera is very beautiful, both in summer greenery and in autumn colors. It is an interesting place from a cultural-historical point of view.

## 09:00 Drive to Shovi

30 km

**Shovi** is a mountain climatic and health resort on the south slopes of the main Caucasus ridge in the region of Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti, Georgia, known for its carbonated water.



## 12:00 Mamisoni Pass, hiking nearby and picnic

15 km

**Mamisoni Pass** is a high mountainous pass in the Central Greater Caucasus crest, on the Georgian-Russian border. It is crossed by the North Ossetian Military Road, a highway that links Kutaisi (Georgia) with Alagir (North Ossetia, Russian Federation). Its peak is 2,911m asl.



## Chiora village

The route from the turning point of the church follows the serpentine and reaches the top of the mountain. From the top of the mountain, the trail goes to the northeast, overcomes the source of river Kholi and reaches Mount Chiora (altitude: 2 386 meters a.s.l.). From the vicinity of Mount Chiora you can enjoy a beautiful view of the surrounding area.



**Ghebi** (literally from Svan language: "*depression*") is an old village in the northern part of Georgian republic, in the region of Racha. From the northern slopes of Caucasus Gebi is bordered by Russia. Ghebi with other two villages (Chiora, Glola) creates one ethno-cultural area, called Mtaracha. Gebi covers a territory of 355 km<sup>2</sup>.



09:00 Drive from Utsera via Alpana Pass to Adjara

100 km

11:00 Lechkhumi Region, Center city Tsageri

**Tsageri** is a town in Georgia, located in Lechkhumi in the west of the country and serving as an administrative center of the Lechkhumi district. Tsageri is located at 475 m above sea level, on the right bank of the Tskhenistskali River



## 16:00 Drive to Shekvetili Dendrological Park

50 km

**Shekvetili Dendrological Park** located in Georgia's western Ozurgeti municipality, in Shekvetili, a seaside resort. Shekvetili Dendrological Park with over 200 giant trees of unique species, 58 species of birds from all continents and bamboo grove is ready to receive visitors. Shekvetili Dendrological Park is spread over 60 hectares and units thousands of species of local and foreign exotic flora. Thousands of different exotic trees have been imported in Georgia from five continents over the past years.

While approaching the unique trees, an electronic, sensor sound system will turn on, and a virtual guide will let visitors know the name, size and information about the tree. Amongst endemic species visitors can find Japanese Raisin trees, Camphor trees and different types of Cedar. An artificial lake located in the centre of the park is about six meters deep. The depth is tailored to the needs of the birds that live near the lake. Visitors can find pink flamingos, pelicans, storks and over 50 species of birds.



**18:00 Drive to Kobuleti Setting up at Kobuleti Hotel**

**25 km**

**19:00 Walk along Kobuleti Beach (swimming if weather affords)**

While approaching the unique trees, an electronic, sensor sound system will turn on, and a virtual guide will let visitors know the name, size and information about the tree. Amongst endemic species visitors can find Japanese Raisin trees, Camphor trees and different types of Cedar. An artificial lake located in the center of the park is about six meters deep. The depth is tailored to the needs of the birds that live near the lake. Visitors can find pink flamingos, pelicans, storks and over 50 species of birds.



16:00 Drive to Batumi

1:00 Visit of Batumi Art Museum







**16.00 Drive to Kutaisi (150 km) Setting up at Kutaisi Hotel**

**17.00 Walk through Kutaisi Center**

**18.00 Back to Kutaisi Hotel**

Breakfast depends on flight time  
Move to Airport. Farewell.



Monument of imeretian singers “Ishkhnelebi”

**INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR  
CAUCASUS TOURISM WELCOMES YOU  
TO EXPLORE BRAND TOURS  
“FROM SNOWY PEAKS TO SEA WAYS”**



# Price overview

- Price of a tour is 700.00 EUR (p.P)<sup>1</sup>
- Number of people in a group - from 25 to 35
- Tour includes three meals per day
- Groups are met at Airport by comfortable bus with a professional driver and a guide
- Representative of ICCT, i.e. Tour Manager accompanies groups during seven days

<sup>1</sup>excluding cost of air ticket

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